

In the claims:

1-95. (Canceled)

96. (Currently Amended) A printing system for printing on a surface comprising:

at least one printing apparatus comprising at least one ink applicator operative to print an image over at least a part of said surface; and

at least one wetting apparatus comprising at least one liquid applicator operative with said ink applicator to apply a wetting composition over at least a portion of said part of said surface prior to printing, said wetting composition being capable of interfering with the engagement of a liquid ink composition with at least one binding site of said surface, the wetting apparatus further comprising at least one retractable bath carrying a thinner liquid, said thinner liquid operative to prevent said wetting composition from drying within said liquid applicator, said retractable bath positioned beneath said liquid applicator and operative to be retracted on demand to expose said liquid applicator to apply said wetting composition onto said surface.

97. (Previously Presented) A printing system according to claim 96, further comprising at least one controller operative to control said at least one liquid applicator to apply said wetting composition onto selected parts of said surface.

98. (Cancelled).

99. (Previously Presented) A printing system according to claim 96, further comprising:

a rigid frame;

a linear motion X-axis mounted on said frame;

at least one table assembly, operative to bear a printable medium, movable on said linear X-axis;

a bridge mounted on said frame perpendicular to said linear X-axis, above said table assembly;

said at least one liquid applicator mounted on said bridge, said at least one liquid applicator operative to apply a wetting composition onto said printable

medium, said wetting composition being capable of interfering with the engagement of a liquid ink composition with at least one binding site of the surface of said printable medium;

a linear motion Y-axis stage mounted on said frame perpendicular to said linear X-axis stages, above said printing table assembly; and

said at least one ink applicator mounted on said linear Y-axis stage for linear motion perpendicular to said X-axis stage.

100. (Withdrawn) A printing system according to claim 96, further comprising:

a rigid frame;

a first linear motion X-axis stage mounted on said frame;

a second linear motion X-axis stage mounted on said frame parallel to said first axis stage, and arranged for operation independently of said first axis stage;

at least one table assembly, operative to bear a printable medium, movable on each said linear X-axis;

a bridge mounted on said frame perpendicular to said linear X-axis, above said table assemblies;

said at least one liquid applicator mounted on said bridge, over each of said X-axis, said at least one liquid applicator operative to apply a wetting composition onto said printable medium, said wetting composition being capable of interfering with the engagement of a liquid ink composition with at least one binding site of the surface of said printable medium;

a linear motion Y-axis stage mounted on said frame perpendicular to said linear X-axis stages, above each of said printing table assemblies; and

said at least one ink applicator mounted on said linear Y-axis stage for linear motion perpendicular to said X-axis stage.

101. (Previously Presented) A printing system according to claim 96, and wherein said image is a photograph.

102. (Previously Presented) A printing system according to claim 96, wherein said surface comprises of at least one of fibrous material, porous material, material having a high surface tension with said liquid ink.

103. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) ~~A pre-printing apparatus for preparing a surface for printing, comprising a~~ The system of claim 96, wherein said wetting apparatus comprises a controllable wetting applicator for wetting selected locations of said surface prior to printing.

104 - 109. (Cancelled)